

Wm. F. Branham

admitted March 13. 1821.

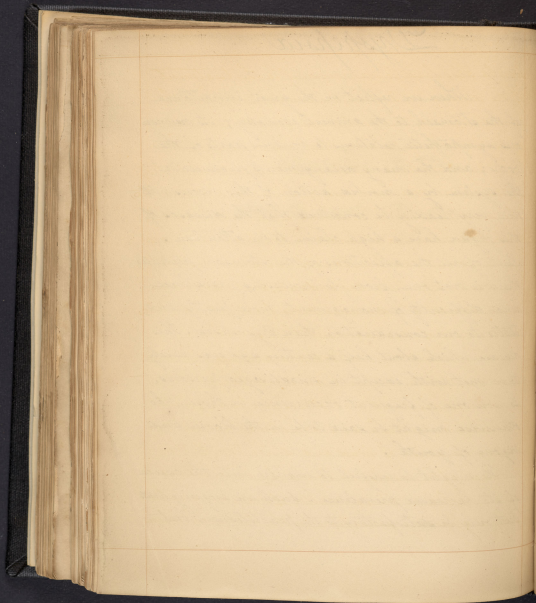
1875

## Dyspepsia

When we reflect on the great importance of the Stomach to the animal economy; its numerous sympathetic relations to various parts of the body; and the many derangements produced in the system by a morbid action of this viscus; it will very readily be conceived that the diseases of this organ have a high claim to our attention.

But of all the affections of the Stomach, perhaps there is not one, from its increasing prevalence and difficulty of management, more justly entitled to our consideration than Dyspepsia. This disease, which about half a century ago was rarely to be met with, except in middle-aged persons, is now one of frequent occurrence in those, who otherwise might be said to be in the bloom and vigour of youth.

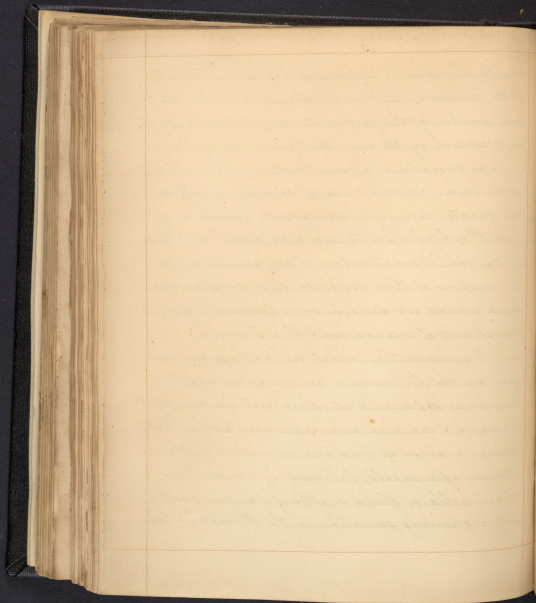
It might be useful to enquire into the cause of its increased prevalence. Such an enquiry would not only be satisfactory to the practitioner, but





would also lead to improvement in the treatment of the disease. But we are compelled to waive the consideration of this part of the subject, and will only remark by the way, that one cause of its greater prevalence (at least in the southern states) is the more common use of Tobacco, and another, the greater luxury in living and indolence of habit, which have tended to obliterate all traces of the robust constitutions of our ancestors in the systems of their descendants, and have rendered almost all diseases more frequent, complex, & difficult of management than formerly.

The symptoms which characterize this disease are the following: an irregular appetite, sometimes deficient & at others preternaturally increased; nausea and sometimes actual vomiting, a sense of load and distention of the Stomach after meals, followed by eructations of air, solid or fluid matter of various qualities; a gnawing sensation in the Stomach when



empty, heartburn, flatul breath, habitual chilliness, coldness of the extremities, generally great costiveness, though sometimes laxity of the bowels, or each of these states alternately; a sense of oppression and constriction about the throat; the mouth and throat are generally dry, especially in the morning, with a disagreeable taste in the mouth, tongue furred and of a white or yellow colour; disordered vision, vertigo, palpitation of the heart &c. These symptoms vary in different individuals; In some cases some of these are wanting; in others additional ones added; as acute pain the head, pain in the sternum or side, acute pain in the optic nerve. To these may be added languor, listlessness, want of resolution, a state of indifference to all events, total restlessness, or unrefreshing sleep, temporary absence of mind, impaired memory, unusual timidity and despondency - in short all the train of symptoms which belong to



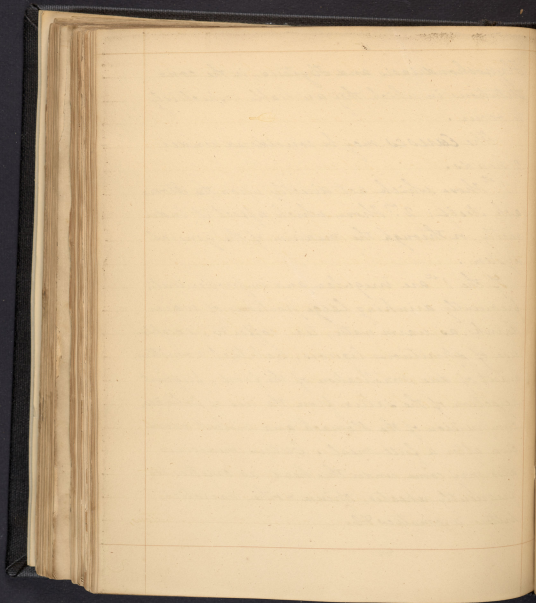
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Hypochondriasis and Hysteria, is the constitution in which they are liable respectively to occur.

The Causes may be considered under 2 heads.

1.<sup>st</sup> Those which act directly upon the Stomach itself; 2.<sup>nd</sup> Those which affect it indirectly, or through the medium of the general system.

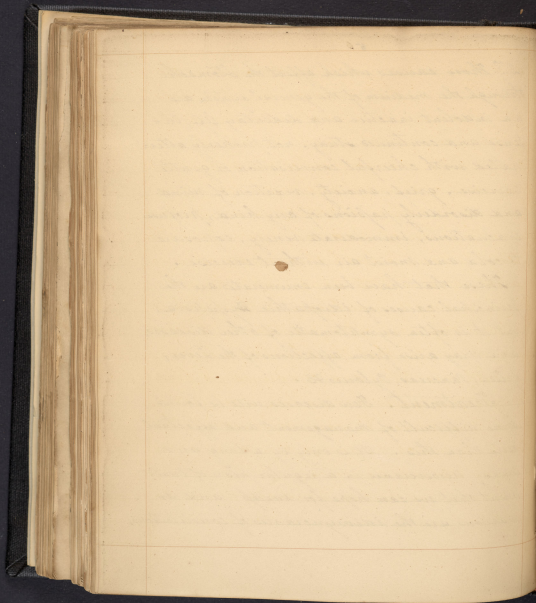
Of the 1<sup>st</sup> are irregular and improper diet, frequently drinking large portions of warm drinks, as warm water, tea, coffee &c., excessive use of spirituous liquors, habitual vomiting, want of due mastication of the food, frequent rejection of the saliva from the use of Tobacco, compression of the Stomach and violent exercise after a full meal. Certain medicines also may come under this head, as emetics too frequently repeated, Opium & other narcotics, bitter aromatics &c.



2.<sup>d</sup> Those causes which affect the Stomach through the medium of the general system are, an indolent inactive and sedentary life, intense and continued study, not properly alternated with cheerful conversation or gentle exercise, grief, anxiety, vexation of mind and disorderly passions of any kind, profuse evacuations, immoderate venery, exposure to cold and moist air without exercise.

These that have been enumerated are the principal causes of idiopathic Dyspepsia; but it is often symptomatic of other diseases, and may arise from affections of the Liver, Spleen, Pancreas, Pylorus &c.

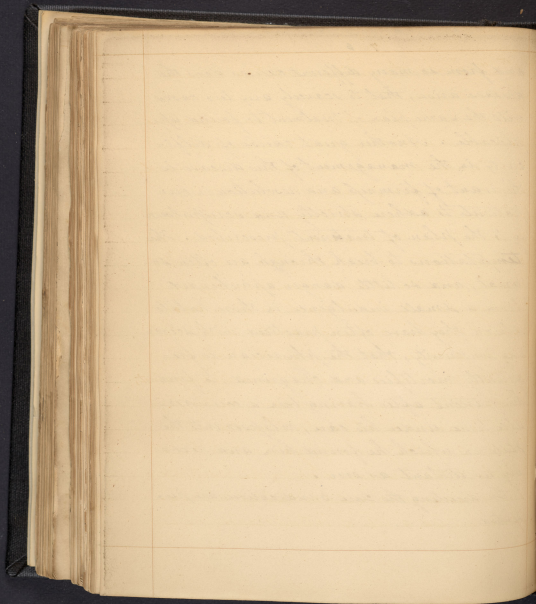
Treatment. Few diseases will be found more difficult of management and effectual cure than this. It is only by a long and steady perseverance in a regular plan of treatment that we can hope for success: and so various are the idiosyncrasies of constitutions,





and from so many different causes does the disease arise, that to scarcely any two cases will the same plan of treatment be found applicable. Another great cause of difficulty in the management of this disease is the want of firmness and resolution in our patients to adhere strictly and scrupulously to the plan of treatment prescribed. The temptations to break through are often so great, and so little danger apprehended from a small indulgence in those habits which they have often practiced with seeming impunity, that the physician is frequently mortified and chagrined, to find his patient after having been a considerable time under his care, relapsed into the state in which he found him and recovery as distant as ever.

In directing the cure 3 indications are presented.



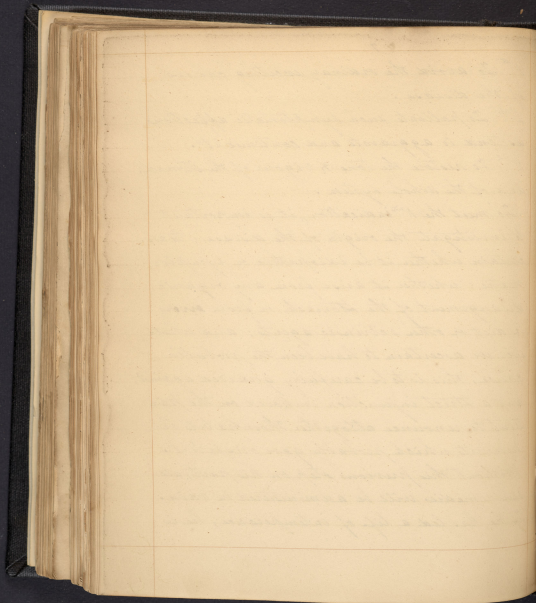
1.<sup>st</sup> To avoid the ordinary exciting causes of the disease.

2.<sup>nd</sup> To palliate such symptomatic affections as tend to aggravate and continue it.

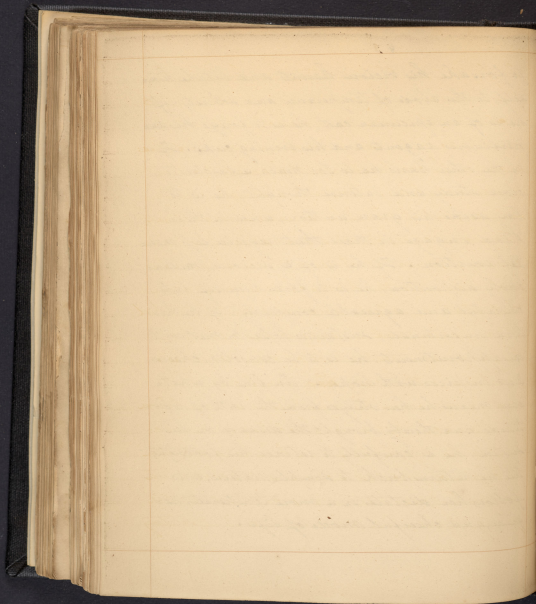
3.<sup>rd</sup> To restore the tone & vigour of the stomach, and of the whole system.

To meet the 1<sup>st</sup> indication, it is important to investigate the origin of the disease; to ascertain whether it be idiopathic or symptomatic; whether it arise from any organic derangement of the stomach, or from errors in diet or other extrinsic agents; and whatever we ascertain to have been the probable cause, this is to be carefully guarded against, and a strict injunction imposed on the patient to renounce altogether those habits or pursuits, which probably gave origin to it.

Without this previous step on his part, all our remedies will be administered in vain. If he has led a life of intemperance, he is



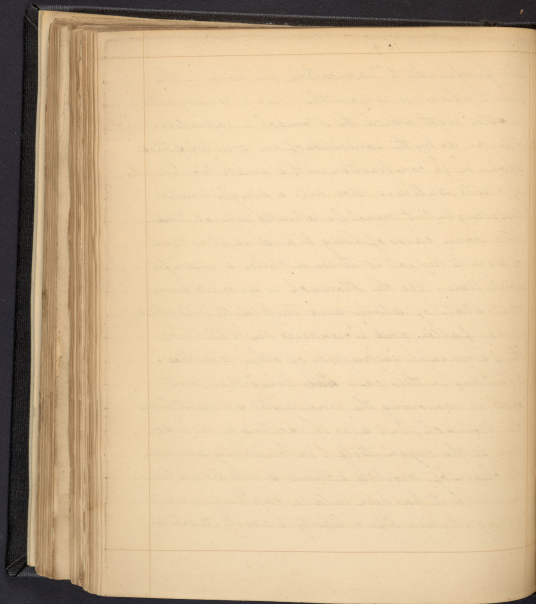
to forsake his vicious haunts and betake himself to the abode of temperance and sobriety: if he is of an epicurean cast, he is to forego his superfluous ragouts and his evening cups. If on the other hand he is too much addicted to close study and intense thought, he is to lay aside his grave authors, and in their stead engage in those that require less mental exertion. If he is of a serious, melancholy disposition, he is to force himself into cheerful and agreeable company: if he has been unfortunate, sustained losses & met with disappointments, he is to be consoled, cheered and inspired with hope. In fine by whatever means he has strayed from the path of rectitude and thereby brought the disease on his system, he is carefully to retrace his footsteps, till he returns back to simple nature, and follows her dictates in a more temperate, regular, and cheerful mode of life.



To fulfill the 2<sup>nd</sup> indication, we have in the first place, to remove the load of undigested matter with which the stomach is oppressed. This we do by the exhibition of an emetic ~~of~~ alone, or in combination with a small portion of Tart. extenuat. Nor will a single emetic suffice, but it must be repeated several times.

In some cases of long standing, it is necessary to repeat it twice or thrice a week for some time, till the stomach is aroused from that state of atony and torpidity into which it has fallen, and is rendered susceptible of the favourable impression of other remedies.

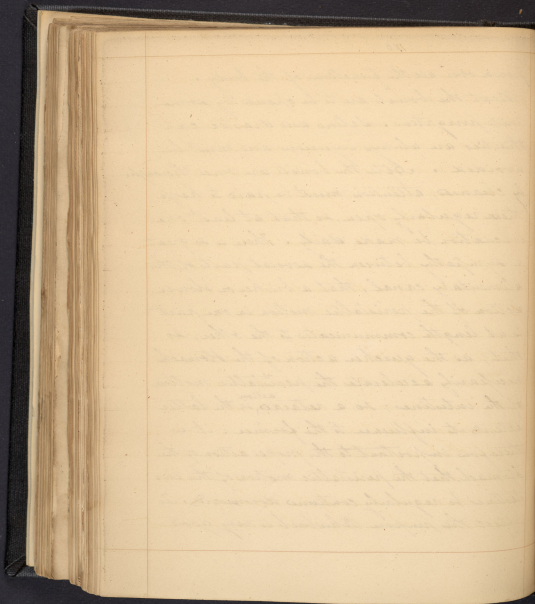
Vomiting in this case ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> beneficial, not only in removing the undigested aliment from the stomach, but also in exciting a new action in the organ itself: in breaking asunder the chain of morbid actions and associations by which it has been held in captivity, and in giving it new life & liberty to exert its salutary



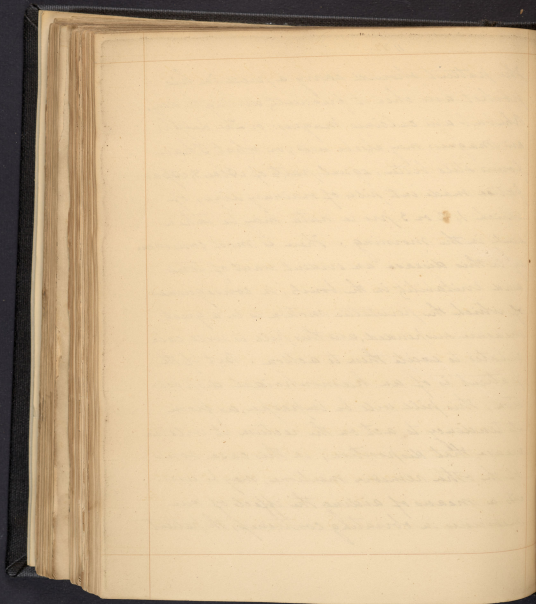


power over all the functions of the body.

Next the bowels are to be opened by some mild purgative. Saline and drastic cathartics are always injurious and must be avoided. After the bowels are once thoroughly cleansed, attention must be paid to keep them regularly open, so that at least one evacuation be made daily. There is so great a sympathy between the several parts of the alimentary canal, that a quicker or slower action of the peristaltic motion in one part is at length communicated to the other; so that, as the quicker action of the stomach necessarily accelerates the peristaltic motion of the intestines; so a retarded <sup>action</sup> in the latter extends its influence to the former: it is therefore important to the proper action of the stomach, that the peristaltic motion of the intestines be regularly continued downward. To effect this purpose Rhubarb is very good

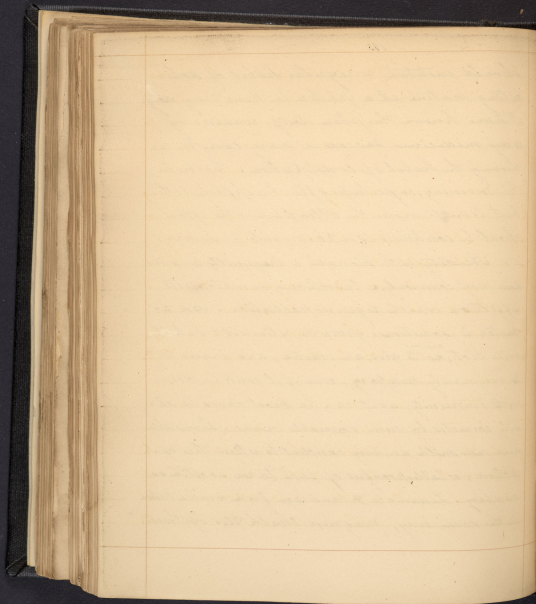


The patient should carry a piece in his pocket and chew it frequently during the day, Rhubarb and calcined Magnes: or Læe Sulph: and Magnes: may also be used; or what I have found still better, equal parts of Clove & oppe-  
 fation made into pills of ordinary size, of which 1, 2 or 3 pro re nata may be taken early in the morning. There is most commonly in this disease an evident want of tone and irritability in the bowels, in consequence of which the peristaltic motion is in a great measure suspended, and this pill is well calculated to excite them to action. But if the patient is of an hæmorrhoidal disposition, this pill will be improper, as from its tendency to act on the rectum it will increase that disposition; in this case some of the other remedies mentioned, may be used. As a means of aiding the effect of our medicines in obviating costiveness, the patient



should institute a regular habit of soliciting nature at a particular hour every day. I have known this plan itself, unaided by any medicines succeed in many cases in removing the habit of constipation. Early in the morning, or perhaps after breakfast, is the best time to make the attempt and the effort should be continued 15 or 20 minutes if required.

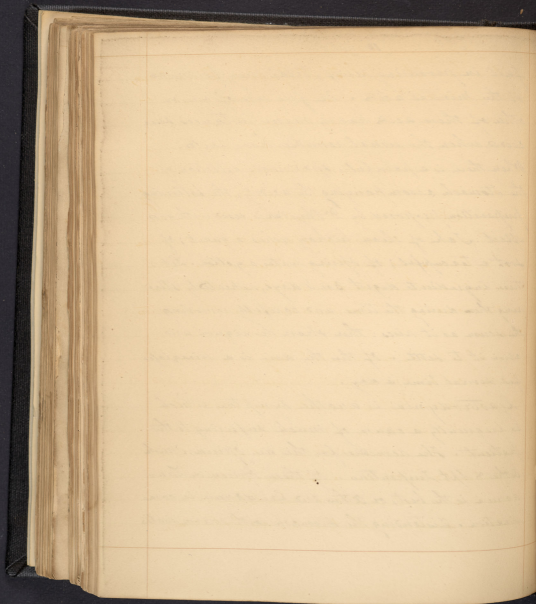
Acidity in the stomach is frequently, and indeed most commonly, a troublesome symptomatic affection which requires palliation. An emetic is sometimes given to relieve it; but it will not, <sup>always</sup> do to give an emetic; and indeed it is very rarely necessary, even if it could be done with impunity, as it can in most cases be easily corrected by more agreeable means. Limewater and new milk are very excellent to relieve this affection; a table-spoonful of each taken as often as necessary. Limewater & Mucilage Gum arabic taken in the same way, Magnes Chalk &c. If these



fail in procuring relief, trial may be made of the Mineral acids. The free use of one or other of these acids has in many instances succeeded, when the usual remedies have failed.

When there is a painful, spasmodic affection of the Stomach accompanying the acidity, the following preparation proposed by Dr Physick is used with good effect: Take of clean, hickory ashes a quart; of soot a tea-cupful; of spring water a gallon. Let these ingredients digest 3 or 4 days, repeatedly stirring them during the time and carefully removing the scum as it rises: then strain the liquor and allow it to settle. Of this the dose is a wineglassful several times a day.

Gastrodynia is another symptom which is frequently a cause of much suffering to the patient. The remedies for this are Opium, Musk & Spt Zerpentins. Of these Opium or Laudanum is the best, or Aether and Laudanum in combination. Distending the Stomach with warm water

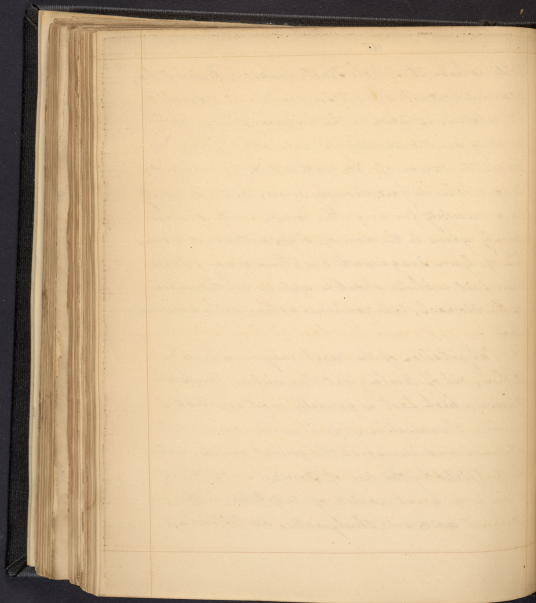




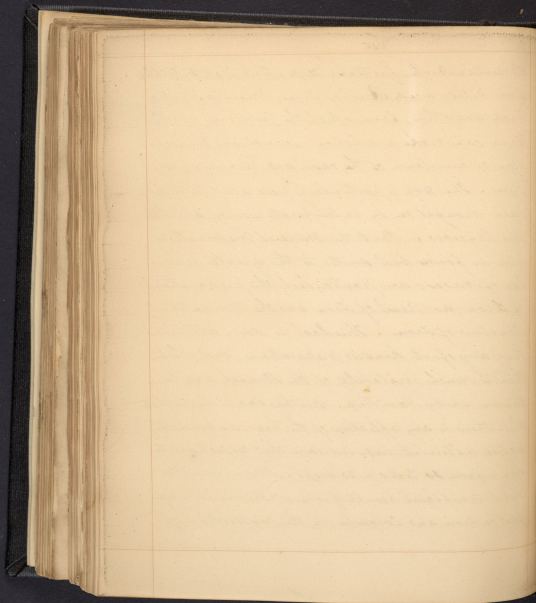
will relieve it. Noli Tinct. Guaiac, Elix. Picra,  
 Mainus cordial and oil Turpentine will prevent  
 its return, if taken in the intermission. But  
 among all the remedies I have seen tryed in this  
 case, the Oxyde of Bismuth stands prominent,  
 and if this is judiciously used, there will rarely  
 be a necessity for any other remedy. It is com-  
 monly given in the dose of 5 grs, with about a scrup-  
 le of Gum Tragacanth 3 or 4 times a day. If all  
 these fail a blister should be applied over the region  
 of the stomach, to be continued as long as the affection  
 lasts.

Palpitation of the heart may be relieved by  
 Ether, oil of Amber, Opt. Turpentine, Musk and  
 Opium which last is generally most effectual.

The 3<sup>d</sup> indication (viz) To restore tone to the  
 stomach and invigorate the general system, is to  
 be fulfilled by the use of Tonics. Of these  
 there is a great variety of Vegetab. bitters,  
 Mineral acids and Chelybeats, as Colomba,



Peruvian Bark, Guttas, Sop, Lugbia, Bitrioka  
 and Nitric acid, Rust of Iron, Muriated Tinct. of  
 Iron and others, from which the judicious practi-  
 tioner can make a selection, according to the pecu-  
 liar circumstance of the case and his own experi-  
 ence. The Sop is particularly well adapted to those  
 cases brought on by intemperate use of spiritua-  
 lous liquors. But the Mineral preparations  
 will be found best suited to the greater num-  
 ber of cases; and particularly the preparations  
 of Iron, as Rust of Iron and the Muriated  
 Tincture of Iron. This last is more active  
 than any of its kindred preparations, and when  
 there is much irritability of the stomach will be  
 thrown up by vomiting. Neither can it be used  
 when there is any affection of the head, as from its  
 active nature it will increase that affection. The  
 dose is from 10 to 20 or 30 drops. I have seen the  
 most beneficial result from a combination of  
 Rust of Iron and Colomba, in the proportion of

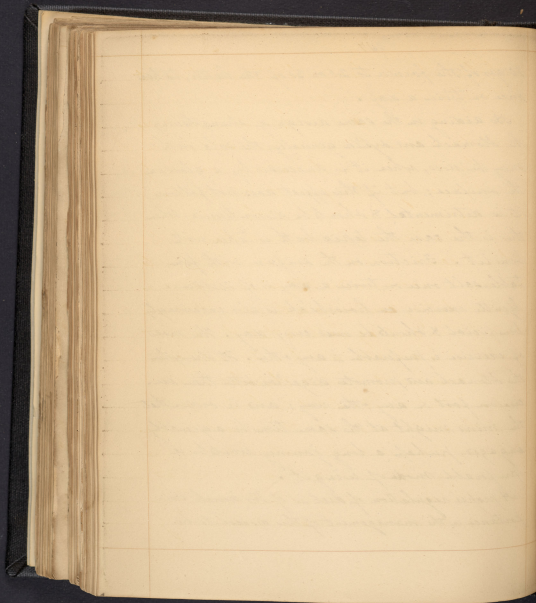


10 grs of the former to 20 or 30 of the latter, taken once or twice a day.

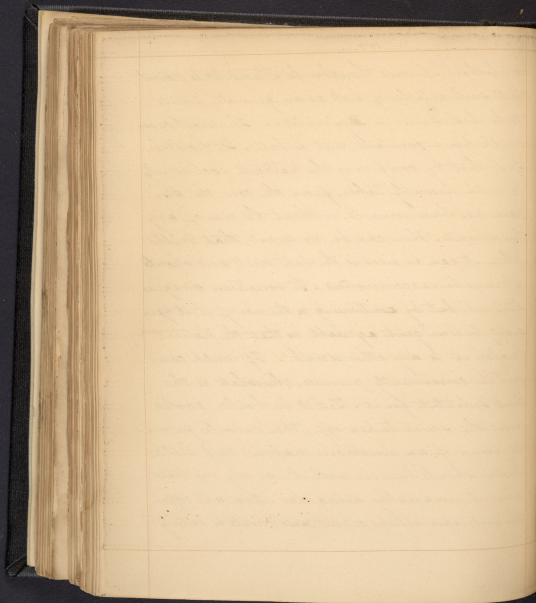
In aiding in the same design of strengthening the stomach and system generally, the cold bath may be used, when it is succeeded by a glow on the surface; but if this effect does not follow, it is detrimental & should be discontinued. When this is the case the tepid bath is taken with benefit. Friction on the surface with fine table salt once or twice a day is of service.

Gentle exercise on horseback is also exceedingly beneficial & should be used every day. This mode of exercise is preferable to any other. It strengthens the stomach and promotes digestion better than exercise on foot or any other way; and in order that the mind might at the same time be agreeably engaged, perhaps a long journey would be a preferable mode of using it.

A proper regulation of diet is of too much importance in the management of this disease to be



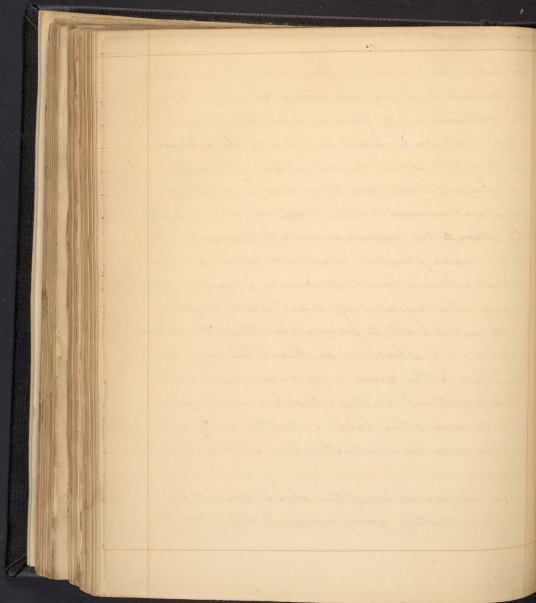
overlooked; it will therefore be attempted to point out such articles of diet as are generally found to be best suited to Dyspeptics. In most cases milk for a constant diet is best. It has been said that by confining the patient exclusively to milk recently taken from the cow, the disease has been removed, without the use of any medicine. There can be no doubt, that milk when it can be used is the best diet, and should always be recommended. It sometimes disagrees at first, but by continuing in the use of it, it generally becomes quite agreeable, so that the patient prefers it to any other drink. If milk cannot be conveniently procured, chocolate is the best substitute for it. Let it be boiled, cooled and the scum taken off, then reboiled for use. It being of an unctuous nature, but little butter should be used with it, as oily matter almost invariably disagrees. Tea and coffee are improper articles of diet and should be entirely





avoided. They are not infrequently the cause of the disease by being used strong & to excess; and the continued use of them undoubtedly tends to aggravate, or at least to prolong it. Best if they are employed at all (and it will be very difficult for those who have long been accustomed to them to refrain from them) they should be prepared weak & used cool. A little sugar should be taken with coffee, as much of that article is found to produce a increase cardiac algia. The refined loaf sugar is to be preferred as it is less liable to fermentation than the brown sugar. The Souchong or black tea is to be preferred to the green. The bread should be cold & without butter. Crackers are preferable to any other bread. Neither buttered toasts, nor buckwheat cakes should be allowed.

The dinner of dyspeptics should consist for the most part of young and fresh beef, mutton,



turkeys, birds generally, oysters or bacon. soups, green and ducks should be avoided. Cold lean ham, well done has proved in many instances to be the best diet for dinner. I am acquainted with several Dyspeptics who confine themselves exclusively to it; having found it, after experimenting with many ~~other~~ articles, to agree better with them than any other. I have no doubt that when it is old, sound and well cooked it will be well suited to the greater number of cases in the Southern States.

As to vegetables, but few of them are admissible. Well cooked Irish potatoes, & rice may be used with impunity and onions pleasantly. No puddings, tarts, custards or pies should be allowed. Fruit and nuts are also generally injurious; though very ripe peaches with milk and also strawberries and milk may not be prohibited.

The patient should be directed to eat little

